

**EMPLOYEE EXCHANGE PROGRAM
FOR THE
ODESSA FIRE DEPARTMENT**

**STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT
OF CHANGE**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to determine to what degree would an employee exchange program (EEP) benefit the Odessa Fire Department (OFD). The problem was that the OFD could not take full advantage of the experiences of other departments because it did not have a formal method to implement an employee exchange program with other fire departments. This research determined the value and provided necessary elements to develop the program. The study also revealed benefits gained by fire departments with actual exchange experience. Agencies outside of the fire service were studied to evaluate the success and structure of various EEP.

The evaluative and action method of research was used to determine if an EEP would be of benefit to the OFD. The answers to four research questions helped to make an informed decision on the feasibility of an OFD exchange program and resulted in a program being established. 1) What is an employee exchange program? 2) What types of employee exchange program are used by other fire departments? 3) What are the benefits of an employee exchange program for the OFD? 4) If the OFD implements an employee exchange program how should the program be structured?

The OFD conducted an internal survey to determine interest and support and an external survey to determine what types of employee exchange programs exist, the structure of the programs, and what benefits could be realized. A literature review and interviews were also conducted with agencies with existing programs to gather pertinent information. The results revealed enough interest, support, and benefits to establish an EEP for the OFD. This researcher recommends this type of information sharing, and potential change provoking program for the fire service that is historically resistant to change and clings to tradition.

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INTRODUCTION

The problem was that the Odessa Fire Department (OFD) could not take full advantage of the experience of other fire departments because it did not have a formal method to implement an employee exchange program with other fire departments. The purpose of this research was to determine to what degree would an employee exchange program benefit the Odessa Fire Department. To develop a plan, four research questions were considered:

- 1) What is an employee exchange program?
- 2) What types of employee exchange programs are used by other fire departments?
- 3) What are the benefits of an employee exchange program for the Odessa Fire Department?
- 4) If the Odessa Fire Department implements an employee exchange, how should the program be structured?

The evaluative and action research methods were used to answer these questions, and ultimately resulted in an actual exchange program being implemented between the OFD and the City of Terlingua, TX.

The OFD has a coverage area of 904 square miles, and provides Emergency Medical Service (EMS) and fire service for a population of approximately 125,000 within the City of Odessa and Ector County with 8 stations and 147 shift personnel. Odessa is located on Interstate 20 in west Texas, halfway between Dallas and El Paso.

The interest in an EEP program came from this researchers participation in the Strategic Management of Change (SMOC) class at the National Fire Academy (NFA). The class stressed the need for the tradition laden fire service to implement change and provided a useful change model to help the changes be successful. The networking opportunities with other fire service

professionals gave this researcher the idea to research and possibly establish an EEP to share and gather the information necessary to facilitate change.

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The Odessa Fire Department was established in 1923. What began as a small seven member, volunteer department, quickly grew to our current status of 147 paid, shift personnel, with 8 stations. The OFD began providing EMS in 1973. Haz-mat and technical rescue teams, fire inspections, and public education/prevention programs are also provided.

Seventy-six percent of the OFD responses are EMS incidents. In 2000, the OFD responded to 9,594 total incidents. The responses consisted of 7,290 EMS, 626 fire, and 1,678 miscellaneous runs. Since a total reorganization of the department in 1996, the OFD has evaluated and changed many things. The department is constantly in search of new and better methods of delivering emergency services as well as alternative funding sources. Many ideas of change were as a result of members of the OFD management team participating in the Executive Fire Officers Program (EFOP) at the NFA. Networking with other departments, applied research projects, and the willingness to change resulted in many innovative ideas being implemented. The idea of this research to evaluate and possibly implement an EEP came from the networking experience of the NFA. The opportunity of a member of one department to spend time working with another department should enhance and encourage the possibility of change to both participating agencies.

The City of Odessa is located in the middle of the oil industry with several manufacturing plants and chemical companies. The knowledge and experience of the Odessa Fire Department with fighting oil field related fires and haz-mat experience could be very helpful to departments

with little experience in this area. On the other hand, departments with considerable knowledge of high-rise building fires, for example, could provide valuable information to the OFD.

Community leaders and the general public expect the OFD to be an effective, efficient, and innovative organization. The reorganization of the department in 1996 helped to achieve this expectation. Ideas for implementing change continue to be encouraged with this administration. The problem faced by the OFD was maintaining the philosophy of thinking out of the box with the lack of outside, thought provoking information. This research afforded the department with an opportunity to evaluate the benefits of an EEP and possibly implement a program designed to share information if proved feasible and beneficial.

The SMOC class attended by this researcher at the NFA was instrumental in providing the topic for this research. The course focused on and encouraged change and innovation for the fire service, something the OFD is committed to. The change model provided by the instructors, served as a helpful guide for developing an exchange program for the OFD, and will no doubt promote success of this and future programs.

From past experience, the Odessa Fire Department can become too comfortable and fall into a rut of doing business as usual, with a “if it’s not broke, don’t fix it” type mentality if the opportunity for change is not available or encouraged. An employee exchange program can provide this opportunity along with ideas of new and improved methods of operations.

The present situation of the OFD is a recent exchange program established with the City of Terlingua to provide the OFD paramedics with experience in frontier rescue and long term patient care, while the Terlingua medics receive an opportunity to experience working with a busy, urban EMS service.

The future objectives for the OFD will be to seek other employee exchange opportunities in a continued effort to promote positive change with not only the OFD, but also with the reciprocating fire departments.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In researching the feasibility and benefits of an EEP to the fire service, a study was conducted of organizations with a history of such a program. Information gathered from Universities, Cities, States, and Federal agencies were included in an effort to examine the exchange program from different perspectives and experiences. Fire departments across the nation were surveyed to determine how common is the practice, and what benefits, if any, exists. E-mail interviews were conducted of Chiefs with actual experience with an EEP.

The City of Elberton, Georgia (1983) developed a Sister City Program with Mure-cho, Japan. This allowed for a two-week exchange program of students and adults to provide an opportunity to learn about the respective cultures. The program expanded in 1998 to facilitate the exchange of city employees. Jimmy Welborn, Public Works Director for the City of Elberton, exchanged with Hiroshi Sato, Chief of Mure Town, Japan Sewer and Water Recycling.

During his stay, Mr. Welborn was able to learn a great deal about the day-to-day operation of Mure Town as well as their plans for the future. Mr. Welborn said, "It was a privilege and an honor for me to be a part of the first Employee Exchange between the City of Elberton and Mure Town".

Mr. Sato had the opportunity to home stay with the City Manager and his family. Mr. Sato was an excellent representative of his community and made every effort to learn about Elberton and the services that are provided to it's citizens. (City of Elberton, 2001 p. 1)

The State of Ohio adopted a similar program for state employees. The program was

created to facilitate a temporary assignment of employees for the purpose of furthering the goals and objectives of the participating parties. The Ohio Administrative Code has been provided below to illustrate the rules pertaining to the employee exchange program.

(A) Assignments made through this program may be for the purpose of:

- (1) Providing program and developmental experience which will enhance employee performance;
- (2) Pursuing innovative ideas to learn new approaches to governmental issues;
- (3) Assisting in the use of new technologies;
- (4) Involving as many participants as needed in the development of governmental policies; or
- (5) Other purposes mutually agreed upon by all parties.

(B) Eligibility. A full-time permanent or part-time permanent employee who is paid directly by warrant of the auditor of state who has successfully completed any initial or promotional probationary period is eligible to participate in this program. This program shall be administered on a strictly voluntary basis. Employees who participate in an exchange remain an employee of their original agency.

(C) Length of assignment. Employee exchange assignments shall be for a period not to exceed two years and may be administered on an intermittent, part-time, or full-time schedule as agreed to by all parties involved.

(D) Employee exchange agreement. An employee exchange shall be implemented by written agreement that is signed by all parties involved, including the employee, the employee's agency, and the organization to which the employee will be assigned. The

specific contents of the agreement may vary, but shall contain, at a minimum, the following:

- (1) The objectives of the assignment and a description indicating how the objectives are to be achieved;
- (2) Name, address, social security number, classification title, civil service status, and salary information that includes all applicable pay supplements of the participating employee(s)
- (3) A detailed description of the employee exchange assignment to include anticipated length, location, and work schedule;
- (4) A stipulation that significant changes in an employee's responsibilities or the nature of the assignment may occur only with the consent of all parties involved and shall not effect the employee's base rate of pay;
- (5) Any changes to an employee's pay or benefits that may occur, including a different holiday schedule and any pay supplements for which the employee would or would not be eligible during the assignment;
- (6) A statement affirming that the employee exchange assignment complies with all applicable ethics laws, rules, policies, and standards;
- (7) A provision that permits termination of the assignment by any party by providing a minimum of seven days advanced notice to all parties involved, or such lesser time as the parties may otherwise agree.

(E) Reimbursement. An employee exchange agreement shall also include a detailed reimbursement method when reimbursement is required by the employee's original

agency. Reimbursements shall be made in accordance with the procedures of the office of budget and management. (State of Ohio, 2001, p. 1)

The Department of Defense (DOD) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) (1997) developed a similar program in 1995. The initiative between the DOD and NASA was to increase cooperation in areas of common interest in aeronautics and space. The program gave both agencies a unique opportunity to work with and learn from each other, to acquire new expertise and innovations, and to provide value to the organization assigned. When returned to the original agency, the employee is assigned to a position that takes advantage of what has been gained.

The goals of the DOD/NASA EEP are to improve technical programs, processes, and procedures, and to provide a “win-win-win” scenario for the home manager, the host manager, and the participating employee. The benefits for the home manager are to receive a qualified employee to fill a need. The employee gains expertise and insights in a career field as well as recognition from senior management. The home manager will receive expertise and a networking bridge to a wealth of other technologies. A typical exchange assignment is:

- ~ Tours last from one to three years.
- ~ Assigned work is at the employee’s current grade (GS 12/15).
- ~ Duties performed are integral to the host organization.
- ~ The program exposes employee to new expertise in fields such as engineering, science, math, computer science or related/new fields.
- ~ Home agency pays the employee’s salary, benefits, and duty station costs; host Agency pays for the training and travel related to assigned work. (DOD/NASA, 1997, p. 2)

An article co-written by Carolan and Hawkins (1990) establishes the International City Managers Association (ICMA) support for an exchange program. The ICMA refers to the program as a peer exchange. The fact that the ICMA supports an exchange initiative may be useful when approaching a City Manager and Council to allow participation in such a program. An Environmental Peer Exchange Program was established to explore new and innovative ways to meet environmental challenges.

The Environmental Peer Exchange Program builds on ICMA's national network of local government experts and enables local government officials (elected or appointed) to meet their counterparts face-to-face, obtain advice. Tour facilities, and gain hands-on knowledge of how another community has handled particular environmental challenges. (Carolan, & Hawkins, 1990, p.5)

An organization called The Recreation Round Table (1995) wrote of a career development exchange program as a cooperative partnership between federal land managing agencies and corporations in the recreation and tourism industries. The program encourages the interchange of management expertise and techniques between public and private sectors. Through developmental exchanges of personnel, both sectors will benefit from a clearer understanding of the way each agency operates.

Senior managers and executives from the Federal agencies and corporations whose duties involve outdoor recreation facilities and programs are encouraged to participate.

Exchanging organizations will mutually recommend individuals for participation. Federal employees should generally be a minimum of grade GS-13. Employees from both sectors must have high potential for top management responsibility; have demonstrated

adaptability to new, diverse working environments; and show relevance of the experience to long-term goals. (The Recreation Round Table, 1995, p.1)

The length of the exchange will normally be 60 to 90 days, but may not require continuous participation during that time span. Employees may serve in a variety of short-term developmental assignments. It is essential that the exchanged employee, the supervisor, and the host organization agree on documented expectations for the program. At the end of the assignment, both the participant and the host should evaluate the experience and document the results. Clearly stated objectives will lead to a more productive assignment.

The expense of travel to and from the assignment may be the responsibility of the sponsoring organization as a career development expense. Additional expenses required while on assignment should be the responsibility of the host organization, but may be negotiated. Government employees will continue to draw their regular pay during their assignment.

Corporations will benefit by opening lines of communications with government, corporate managers will return from government agencies better able to interpret administrative policies, federal agencies will benefit from business perspectives provided by corporate managers, and government managers will return with a greater expanded network of contacts, a fresh perspective and an innovative approach to management. All participants should be expected to share the exchange experience within the respective agencies.

Colleges and Universities have an established network of employee exchange programs as explained by the Queensland, (AUS) University of Technology (QUT) (2001). Participating learning institutions encourage employees to explore and study other cultures and experiences from around the world. The QUT job exchange is to enhance the personal development of participants and to give an opportunity to broaden particular areas of expertise.

These aims are achieved by enabling individuals to exchange with staff in relevant positions in Australia or overseas. Staff is not limited to exchanging with employees of other tertiary institutions – they can also exchange with employees of commercial and governmental organizations. (Queensland University of Technology, 2001, p.1)

The length of the exchange is subject to negotiation, but is usually a minimum of three months and a maximum of one year. An interesting policy of the QUT is that the staff member normally pays the expense, unless it can be demonstrated that the exchange will significantly benefit the University. QUT is committed to supporting an exchange program but reserves the right to withdraw from those commitments, with a minimum of a thirty-day notice.

The University of North Carolina at Wilmington (UNC) (1995) established a similar exchange program in an effort to promote professional development of employees. The job exchange is designed to broaden the employee's experience and build skills that enhance the likelihood of the employee being promoted into positions of greater responsibilities at the University.

The UNC exchange program may be concurrent, reciprocal, or cooperative in nature, and may be of any duration up to four months or one full semester. During a concurrent exchange, employees must share the same duties, responsibilities, and departments during a designated period. A reciprocal exchange is when the departments trade the services of employees during different periods of time. Reciprocal exchanges generally last from two to six weeks. During a cooperative exchange, departments loan an employee to another but do not receive an employee in the exchange.

To this point, we have read about the experiences of local, state, and federal governments, as well as educational institutions that actively participates in an employee

exchange program. Of more interest to the fire service would be how such a program could benefit department operations. Perhaps a review of an article by Strickland and Tamillow (1986) about the experience of an international exchange program between Fairfax County, (VA) Fire and Rescue Department with the Hampshire Fire Brigade, Hampshire County, (U.K.) could provide some answers.

The exchange program has proven beneficial not just to the individual participants, but to both fire departments. It is essential that modern fire departments respond quickly to the problems associated with today's rapidly changing technology. A program that provides for the exchange of ideas and exposure to different methods of operation is beneficial because most fire departments traditionally have been parochial in their outlook and resistant to change. (Strickland, & Tamillow, 1986, p.26)

In Fairfax County, the exchange program is conducted annually and is open to ranks of mid-management and above. The individuals selected to participate are assigned three topics each to research during the month-long exchange. This exchange is not simultaneous but instead is offset by two months. The British officers visited Fairfax County in March and the Fairfax County Officers visited the Hampshire Fire Brigade in May. This arrangement allowed the two officers to become well acquainted and interact with each other throughout both visits.

One of the main objectives of an exchange program is the mutual sharing of the two departments' different ideas, philosophies and procedures. We were charged with investigating and reporting on several topics that would be of value to our department. In doing this, we found many useful ideas and observed interesting operations.

For example, Hampshire excels in fire ground safety. Like other United Kingdom fire brigades, it places a high priority on the use of breathing apparatus. Some of the fire

ground procedures they have developed we believe could be adapted to situations in our home department. (Strickland, & Tamillow, 1986 p. 27)

The Hampshire brigade does not provide EMS. The Ambulance Corps manages EMS which is part of the National Health Service. The system did not provide advanced life support. After observing a system that separates the functions of fire fighting and EMS, the Fairfax County officers experienced a renewed appreciation for the EMS services provided back home.

Renalls (1991) wrote of an exchange program between the Duluth, (MN) Fire Department (DFD) and the Brisbane Fire Brigade (BFB) of the Queensland, (AUS) fire service, provided the participants the opportunity to switch places for a year. The idea came from Duluth firefighter, Mitch Peterson. Peterson took the idea to officials of the DFD and then to the Queensland officials. As a result, Peterson went to Australia for a year, and two Australian firefighters divided the exchange time in two, six-month intervals.

Australian firefighter, John Cawcutt, and family struggled with the non-metric system, driving on the right side of the road, and skating rinks that form while fighting fires in cold weather. The temperature difference of the two locations was very different.

In Brisbane, the coldest it gets in the winter is 40 degrees and the biggest problem is heat exhaustion from fighting fires in sub-tropical climate. The uniforms are lighter, designed to ward off heat. In Duluth, the gear is designed to keep the firefighters safe and warm.

Duluth fires are also different. Basement, chimney and furnace fires are a new experience for Cawcutt. In Brisbane, houses are built on stilts to keep them cool and furnaces aren't necessary. Fewer house fires occur there, but when they do, the destruction is usually complete. (Renalls, 1991, p. 55)

The program is a "pay-your-own-way" exchange with no cost to the City of Duluth and

Brisbane. Participants pay their own expenses, in addition to swapping homes and vehicles during the exchange. One difference of the two departments is the EMS system. Duluth firefighters respond to medical calls, and Australian firefighters do not. Cawcutt returned to Brisbane with information on the DFD method of EMS response, which could initiate change within the Queensland Fire Service.

Another Australian fire service exchange program reported by Hawker (1998) was established between Noosa Head, Queensland and Bend, Oregon. The participants were Australian Merv Bonnell and Bend Oregon firefighter, John Muller.

Bonnell, Muller, Queensland's state-run fire department and the City of Bend worked out the details. Both men would pay transportation expenses for their families to cross the Pacific. Plus, each would stay on his own department's payroll and worker's compensation policy during the trade, so neither government incurred extra expenses. They would live in each other's homes, drive each other's vehicles, and fight each other's fires. (Hawker, 1998, p. 102)

One of the sharpest differences between the two countries in firefighting is the Australians use of high-pressure, low-volume attacks vs. the U.S.' high-volume, low-pressure philosophy. Instead of pre-connected hose lines for initial attacks, the Australians use high-pressure hose reels with the believe this approach causes less water damage, provides better penetration and is easier to handle. (Hawker, 1998, p. 103)

Hawker wrote of another interesting difference in the funding for the Australian Fire Service. The entire state is one fire department and members can transfer from city to city. Funding comes from insurance companies and state and utility surcharges.

Baltic (1998) wrote of the U.S./U.K. fire officer exchange program that any fire officer would benefit from a cross-cultural exchange.

“To sum up briefly, I think that just being exposed to a different way of doing a very similar job is refreshing and makes you review why you and your department tackle a particular problem in a particular way, and makes you think, ‘Could we do it better?’” said Station Officer Andy Newland who spent October attached to Hampton, (VA) Fire and Rescue. (Baltic, 1998, p.8)

Another article by Baltic (1997) explains a three-way exchange program between Somerset, (U.K.) Fire Brigade – Plano, (TX) Fire Department, and the Hampton, (VA) Fire and Rescue Department. British Officer, Phillip Martin, spent a month at the Plano (TX) Fire Department and returned to Somerset (U.K.), with the information necessary to implement elements of Plano’s public education programs, initiatives to break down barriers between uniformed and non-uniformed personnel, management of carbon monoxide incidents, Plano’s team training program, and better use of software packages, e-mail and the internet. According to Baltic, one of the most obvious benefits of an employee exchange program is the exposure to operations in another department, especially in a foreign culture.

A protocol written by the Longboat Key, (FL) Fire-Rescue Department (1998) explains an exchange program established with the Sarasota County, (FL) Fire Department. The stated purpose of the protocol is to diversify EMS experience and command personnel in an effort to enhance the knowledge, skills, and ability of emergency personnel. The two departments believed the program would also enhance the effectiveness of mutual aid and automatic aid

between both agencies. The protocols are included in this research for potential use or reference. (Appendix E)

An Australian firefighter exchange protocol (Lowe, 1994) (Appendix J) from the Tasmanian State Fire Commission provides the rules pertaining to Tasmanian's exchange program. The Tasmania fire service encourages all permanent employees to participate. The exchange is an effort to broaden the experience base of the employee. The participants are required to arrange the exchange with the other agency and pay for travel to and from the States and accommodations for the duration of the exchange.

The program exists to provide employees with the opportunity to work in an alternative fire service in Australia, to enhance cross-organizational knowledge and awareness of fire and other emergency response procedures and practices, and to contribute to the personal and professional development of firefighters and officers. (Lowe, 1994) (Appendix J)

In reviewing organizations with actual knowledge and experience with an employee exchange, a great deal of information can be gained through such programs. Departments with an interest in improving services and organizational procedures should consider implementing an exchange program. The program can be tailored to satisfy the needs of the participating organizations and individual. The requirement by the State of Ohio (2001) of establishing written, signed agreements with pre-determined objectives is an excellent method for all involved to have a clear understanding of what is to be achieved. The exchange guidelines included in this research from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington (2001), Queensland University of Technology (2001), The Recreation Round Table (1995), the State of Ohio (2001), the Longboat Key, (FL) Fire-Rescue (1998), and the protocols of the Tasmanian,

(AUS) Fire Commission provided by Lowe (1994) should be useful information with planning an exchange program. The information included in this research by Baltic (1997, 1998), Hawker (1998), and Renalls (1991) of the experiences of fire departments actually participating in an EEP, may prove useful when evaluating the benefit of such a program. Clear objectives and guidelines can assist in planning many elements of the exchange, such as; the amount of time, the rank of participants, liability issues, and the cost involved. Information shared in such a manner could result with innovative changes within an otherwise tradition-mired organization such as the fire service. The success of other agencies with an exchange program and the information gained through this literature review, resulted in the OFD developing an employee exchange program.

PROCEDURES

The desired outcome of this research was to evaluate the usefulness of an employee exchange program (EEP) and if such a program would benefit the Odessa Fire Department. If a program seemed to be feasible and beneficial, a plan for implementing an EEP would be developed. Departments across the nation were surveyed to evaluate the value and support the fire service placed on such a program. The interest of other departments would prove vital to the success of an exchange program. Departments were selected by size, geographical location, or firefighting expertise (ex. high-rise/brushfire). A sample of this survey can be found in Appendix A, the results in Appendix B. An internal survey was also conducted to establish the interest and support of an exchange program. The survey is included as Appendix C and the results can be reviewed in Appendix D.

A literature review was conducted to obtain information from fire departments and organizations out-side the fire service that has experience with an EEP. The literature was

studied in an effort to gain enough information to determine if such a program would be productive and if so, develop a plan for participation. An e-mail interview was conducted with Battalion Chief Scott Rounds of the Chandler, (AZ) Fire Department (Appendix H) and Fire Chief Buddy Martinette of the Lynchburg, (VA) Fire Department (Appendix I). A protocol from the Longboat Key, (FL) Fire-Rescue Department (Appendix E) and the Tasmanian, (AUS) State Fire Commission (Appendix J) on an employee exchange program was reviewed and included.

POPULATION

The internal survey (Appendix C) was distributed to 30 members of the department with a return of 80%. The internal study results (Appendix D) provided information necessary to determine the interest and support of an EEP. With 75% of the surveyed shift personnel stating an interest and 100% of the upper management also expressing an interest in the program, provided the support to develop an employee exchange program.

The population of the cities surveyed ranged from 5,937 to 610,337, with an average population of 137,175. The departments were both paid and combination with an average of 197 members. The smallest department reported 30 members and the largest reported 745 members. All but one of the 21 departments surveyed support an employee exchange program, but only three of the 21 actually participate in one. The departments surveyed are in Alabama, Arizona, California, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Kansas, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and Washington. Twenty of the twenty-one departments indicated an interest in the concept, which if presented with a request, may be useful in establishing a very diverse, employee exchange network. A department should first identify a particular interest or need and then research what departments may have useful information, then determine if an employee exchange would be an appropriate tool to use.

LIMITATIONS

Limitations of evaluating the usefulness of an employee exchange program for the fire service is that not many departments participate, and those that do, have few if any, written policies or procedures. Participating departments usually have a verbal agreement between the two organizations. The written policies of an EEP between the DOD and NASA and the various educational institutions could easily be adapted to the fire service, and have been included in this research for consideration.

Another limitation for this research was the absence of research papers in the National Fire Academy Learning Resource Center on an EEP. This researcher was unable to locate or reference the writing of other EFOP participants on this particular subject.

The interest demonstrated by the surveyed departments indicates this type of program could be a common method of information sharing in the future. As many departments strive to change and enhance services, seek alternative funding sources, or simply gather information, the exchange program may prove to be viable resource in this quest.

RESULTS

The results of the literature review, interviews, and surveys helped to answer the research questions and evaluate the advantages of an employee exchange program. The results of the research are as follows:

Research Question # 1

What is an employee exchange program?

Answer: An employee exchange program is a method of sharing information between two entities with each agency allowing an employee usually of equal rank to work with another similar agency to share and gather information. The OFD conducted an internal survey to

determine the interest and support of the members. The survey indicated 75% of the members supported developing an exchange program.

An external survey was conducted to determine if other departments participated in an employee exchange program, and if not, if the program would be considered beneficial for the fire service. While 84.2% of the returned surveys indicated no employee exchange program was in place, 93.75 % indicated an interest in the concept of such a program.

Research Question #2

What types of employee exchange programs are used by other fire departments?

Answer: Exchanges may be concurrent, reciprocal, or cooperative in nature and varies in the length of time for the exchange. Concurrent exchanges are when employees perform substantially the same duties, trade responsibilities and departments during a designated time. A reciprocal exchange is when departments trade the services of employees during different periods of time as utilized in the employee exchange of the Fairfax County, (VA) Fire Department and the Hampshire, (U.K.) Fire Brigade. The cooperative exchange is when departments loan an employee to another department but do not receive an employee in the exchange. The type of exchange that is most common by fire departments seems to be done concurrently, but the other options are also viable. The University of North Carolina at Wilmington utilizes all three types of exchanges. The goals and objectives of the exchange would probably dictate what type exchange would be most appropriate.

Research Question # 3

What are the benefits of an employee exchange program that would be beneficial to the Odessa Fire Department?

Answer: The benefits to the Odessa Fire Department for participating in such a program are expressed very well by the protocols written by the University of North Carolina at Wilmington (1995). An OFD employee exchange program should prove important in promoting professional development of employees, building skills and abilities, and to broadening the employee's experience. As a result, shared experience and knowledge gained from other departments could prevent an expensive trial and error approach.

Research Question # 4

If the Odessa Fire Department implements an employee exchange, how should the program be structured?

Answer: The program should be structured to meet the objective of the OFD and the other exchanging entity. A committee consisting of members of the legal and risk management department, city and fire administration, fire officers, and elected officials should be established. In all circumstances, written, signed, and agreeable objectives should be shared with all participants. Date and length of time of exchange, expense responsibilities, pay and benefits, legal issues, as well as liability issues should be addressed. A written and signed inter-local agreement approved by the governing bodies of both participating agencies should be adopted prior to an exchange.

Internal Survey Results

Of the 30 internal surveys distributed, 80% were returned, and 75% indicated the department would benefit with developing an employee exchange program, 25% disagreed. While $\frac{3}{4}$ of the surveyed members indicated the program would be good for the department, only 54% indicated a willingness to participate, leaving 46% not willing to. The members of the department were asked what rank should be included in the exchange, 4.5% answered

firefighters, 28.5% no one should participate, and 67% answered all ranks should be involved. When asked how much time should be allocated for each exchange, 17% answered days, 33.5% answered weeks, and 17% answered one month. The survey indicated 33.5% thought 2 weeks would be enough time, 17% answered a few days, another 17% stated a month would be appropriate, while 32.5% did not indicate a time.

Since 75% of the surveyed members thought such a program would be of benefit to the OFD, and the literature review indicated positive results from other agencies, the department developed a plan for participation in an employee exchange program, and actually established a program with Terlingua, Texas (Appendix F). A copy of the survey is included as Appendix C and Appendix D provides the OFD internal survey results.

External Survey Results

The external surveys were sent to various departments across the nation to determine if an employee exchange program was being used, how many participate, specific details of the program, and if not currently participating, how much interest exist in an EEP. Twenty-one surveys were distributed with a return of 90.48%. The survey asked if the department is paid, volunteer, or combination. The results indicated 84% of the departments were paid, 16% were combination, and 0% was a volunteer department. To determine the size of the department, the number of members was requested. The smallest department had 30 members and the largest maintained 700 members, with an average of 197 members of the surveyed departments. When asked if an EEP is utilized, 16% answered yes, and 84% answered no. The participating departments were all willing to share information about the program. Of the 21 departments surveyed, 20 indicated an interest in an exchange program, which indicates the concept of the program received a 94% approval rating. The survey participants were asked which fire service

ranks should be involved in an exchange, and 16% answered Firefighters, 37% Captains, 21% Battalion Chiefs, and Assistant Chiefs, Fire Chiefs, and Lieutenants all received 6%, but 46% answered that all ranks should be involved. The questions of amount of time for an employee exchange resulted in 28% for only a few days, 47.5% indicated a couple of weeks, while 24% indicated an exchange of 2 to 6 months.

The average population of the cities surveyed was 137,175. The smallest city had a population of 7,474 and the largest had a population of 610,337. A copy of the external survey is included as Appendix A and the results of the survey are illustrated in Appendix B.

As a result of the information gained through the literature review, interviews, and internal and external surveys, the Odessa Fire Department was able to evaluate the feasibility of an EEP, and actually established a program with the City of Terlingua, Texas. The exchange program has not been used as of this writing, but will provide the OFD paramedics with experience in frontier rescue and extended patient care, while allowing the Terlingua medics the opportunity to participate on busy, urban ambulances. An inter-local agreement between Terlingua and the City of Odessa has been established. (Appendix F)

DISCUSSION

The Odessa Fire Department has been very innovative, especially in the past six years. Part of the innovations can be attributed to the management staff participation in the EFOP of the NFA, but the remaining credit belongs to the administration's vision of more efficient and safer methods of providing emergency services.

This innovative thinking resulted in a total reorganization of the department in 1996. The OFD went from three men, basic life support engines to four men, advanced life support engines. An innovative decision to participate in a leasing program resulted in replacing worn out fire

apparatus with new equipment, and reducing the engines replacement schedule from 20 years to eight. The OFD changes have proven very successful. An EEP should generate more ideas and result in progressive, innovative changes, not only for the OFD, but also the other participating department.

The longevity of an eighteen-year exchange program between the City of Elberton, Georgia and Mure-cho, Japan, illustrates the success that can be realized if both organizations support such a program. The exchange of the Public Works Director of Elberton with Mure-town's Chief of Sewer and Water Recycling proved to be very beneficial to both participating agencies with learning of the day-to-day operations of both organizations. (City of Elberton, 2001)

The State of Ohio (2001) employee exchange policy provides a useful guideline that should be considered by organizations when establishing such a program. The policy outlines considerations for assignments, eligibilities, employee agreements, program objectives, reimbursement issues, and the length of exchanges.

The Department of Defense and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (DOD/NASA) (1997) explained the purpose, benefits, and selection process of the federal exchange program. The departments stated the program improves each agencies technical programs, processes and procedures through the use of expertise shared during personnel exchange assignments. The program provides a "win-win-win" situation for the participants, the home manager, the host manager, and the employee.

The article by Milou and Hawkins (1990) describing the support of the International City Managers Association (ICMA) for an employee exchange program could be useful information for a Chief approaching the local city administration. The ICMA success and support originated

through an effort to help local governments explore new and innovative ways to meet environmental challenges.

The Recreation Round Table (1995) wrote of the career development exchange program that is a cooperative partnership between Federal land managing agencies and corporations in the recreation and tourism industry. The program encouraged the interchange of management expertise and techniques between public and private sectors. Through developmental exchanges of personnel, both sectors will benefit from a clearer understanding of the way each conducts business.

Educational organizations such as the University of North Carolina at Wilmington and Queensland, (AUS) University of Technology participates in a job exchange programs that are as successful as the programs established by other agencies. The Queensland University of Technology (2001) answered many questions pertaining to the job exchange program. Information is provided about the purpose of the exchange, program eligibility, the length of the exchange, arranging an exchange, financial considerations, living arrangements, and benefits for the participants.

The University of North Carolina at Wilmington (1995) explained in the University's employee exchange policy the same information included by Queensland but goes into detail about the employee and exchange program evaluation, requesting exchanges, and facilitating, finalizing, or terminating agreements.

Hawker (1998) wrote of the success between fire departments in Bend, Oregon and Noosa Heads, Queensland. The benefits of the exchange were illustrated with both agencies gaining insight on the philosophy of each departments water and pressure usage. The fact that

EMS is handled entirely different, and the funding differences of each agency would no doubt be thought provoking for each organization.

Strickland and Tamillow (1986), both Captains of the Fairfax County, (VA) Fire and Rescue Department (FCFRD), wrote of the exchange between the FCFRD and the Hampshire County, (U.K.) Fire Brigade (HCFB). The annual exchange program was set up for mid-management and above. The program was different in the fact that the exchange is not simultaneous, but is offset by approximately two months. This method allowed the selected officers to become well acquainted and interact with each other throughout both visits. The main objectives of the participating departments were the mutual sharing of ideas, philosophies, and procedures. FCFRD learned from the fire ground safety practices of the HCFB and in return, the HCFB was provided valuable information on a fire department based EMS system.

An article by Baltic (1998) describes the advantage of an employee exchange program for the fire service. The article explains the experience of an exchange between Somerset, (U.K.) Fire Brigade (SFB) and the Plano, (TX) Fire Department (PFD). The appreciation for the program is similar to the others with both departments leaving with information that will initiate change. The SFB hopes to implement elements of Plano's public education program, initiatives to break down barriers between uniformed and non-uniformed personnel, management of carbon monoxide incidents, Plano's team training program, and better use of software packages, e-mail, and the Internet. The PFD was introduced to the advantages of using video and cable access to train firefighters. The system delivers training to stations directly and saves the expense of firefighters going to different venues. The use of positive pressure ventilation, and Somerset's juvenile fire setter program would also be of interest to the PFD.

Another article by Baltic (1997), explains the experience of the Hampton, (VA) Fire and Rescue Department (HFRD), Somerset, (U.K.) Fire Brigade (SFB), and the Spokane, (WA) Fire Department (SFD). This exchange involves an officer from each department spending a month with each organization to share information. The difference in attack lines and water pressure were of particular interest to all participants. The limited water supply in the U.K. dictates a more conservative approach. The U.K. training facilities, research on positive pressure and back-draft situations, and the SFB accountability system impressed the U.S. participants.

Renalls (1991) wrote of the exchange between the Duluth, (MN) Fire Department (DFD) and the Brisbane, (AUS.) Fire Brigade (BFB). The cold temperature, non-metric system, and driving on the right side of the road was new challenges of the visiting Australian firefighter. The exchange was for one year and each participant was responsible for the cost. The BFB divided the one-year exchange between two firefighters. Each would work with the DFD for six months, but the member of the DFD worked the entire year. The exchange provided the BFB with first hand experience with a fire based EMS and the DFD participant experienced firefighting in a sub-tropical environment.

The research of an EEP allowed the OFD the information needed to evaluate the program. The program offers the opportunity to experience things first hand, gather and share information, and provides an instrument to encourage change. Change is necessary to continually enhance the services of an organization. The OFD decided to establish an EEP with the City of Terlingua, Texas in an effort to provide the OFD paramedics with the opportunity to experience frontier search and rescue, as well as long term patient care. The Terlingua medics will in turn experience a busy, urban EMS system.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The data collected through both an internal and an external survey and the information gained through the literature review supports the concept of establishing an EEP. The literature review contained in this research paper provided the information necessary to write an organized exchange program.

Benefits enjoyed by participating fire departments and other outside agencies, provided the necessary information and incentive to establish an EEP for the OFD. Evaluating the success, policies, and structure of other programs provided the framework for a program developed between the OFD and the City of Terlingua, TX. The OFD is committed to being a progressive and innovative department, and the exchange program will enhance and encourage continued innovative thinking. The idea of this research for the sharing of information between departments derived from participation in the EFOP of the NFA. During a search in the NFA Learning Resource Center, this researcher could not find an EFOP paper on this particular topic. This was surprising since the external survey conducted of fire departments across the nation indicated an interest in such a program.

The recommendation of this author is for fire departments to establish an organized method of networking and sharing of information. The trial and error method of operation does not make sense and could prove to be an expensive, time consuming approach to providing services. The mindset of, “if it isn’t broke, don’t fix it, or “it’s a tradition or a sacred cow” should be replaced with, “if isn’t broke, break it” or “sacred cows make good hamburger”. This new, innovative way of thinking will no doubt encourage positive change within the fire service. As a result, the fire service can take full advantage of modern, technological advances, educational

opportunities, and sharing knowledge and expertise through programs similar to an employee exchange, or information exchange program.

Recommendations by Baltic (1998) (1997), Renalls (1991), Hawker (1998), Strickland and Tamillow (1986) all agree that an EEP would be beneficial to the fire service and each provided examples of the success of past exchanges. The information that each participating department obtained from the exchange gave the opportunity to facilitate positive change. Guidelines furnished in the writings of the University of North Carolina of Wilmington (1995), Queensland, (AUS) University of Technology (2001), the DOD/NASA (1997), Lowe (1994), Longboat Key, (FL) Fire-Rescue (1998), and the Recreational Round Table (1995) all provided necessary and useful procedural information with establishing an EEP.

The purpose of this research was to determine to what degree would an EEP benefit the OFD. The research revealed such a program offers opportunity to develop new and innovative ideas to implement positive change within the department. The problem of not being able to take full advantage of the experiences of other fire departments because of no formal method of implementing an EEP was resolved by this research.

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Appendix A

Odessa Fire Department Charlie Smith, Assistant Chief External Fire Service Survey Employee Exchange Program

The Odessa Fire Department is interested in obtaining information pertaining to establishing an employee exchange program. The theory behind such a program is to share information and practices. The information you provide will be included in an applied research paper of the Executive Fire Officer Program for the National Fire Academy. Thank you for your time and participation in answering the questions below.

- 1) Name of organization? _____
- 2) Is your department (please circle one)

PAID VOLUNTEER COMBINATION
- 3) How many members do you have within your department? _____
- 4) Does your department participate in an employee exchange program?

YES NO
- 5) If you currently participate in a program, would you be interested in sharing information pertaining to your program?

YES NO
- 6) If your department does not currently participate in an employee exchange program, do you believe your department would be interested in participation in such a program?

YES NO
- 7) Do you support the concept of an employee exchange program?

YES NO
- 8) In your opinion, what rank should those selected to participate be? (please circle)

Firefighter Captain Battalion Chief Asst. Chief
Fire Chief All Ranks should be considered
- 9) How much time do you think the exchange of employees should be?

_____ Days _____ Weeks _____ Months _____ Years
- 10) Additional comments: _____

Thank You

Appendix B

External Survey Results Odessa Fire Department Charlie Smith, Assistant Chief Employee Exchange Program

The Odessa Fire Department is interested in obtaining information pertaining to establishing an employee exchange program. The theory behind such a program is to share information and practices. The information you provide will be included in an applied research paper of the Executive Fire Officer Program for the National Fire Academy. Thank you for your time and participation in answering the questions below.

- 1) Name of organization? _____
- 2) Is your department (please circle one)

84% PAID 0% VOLUNTEER 16% COMBINATION
- 3) How many members do you have within your department? average of 197 members
- 4) Does your department participate in an employee exchange program?

16% YES 84% NO
- 5) If you currently participate in a program, would you be interested in sharing information pertaining to your program?

100% YES (those that had a program) 0% NO
- 6) If your department does not currently participate in an employee exchange program, do you believe your department would be interested in participation in such a program?

94% YES 6% NO
- 7) Do you support the concept of an employee exchange program?

94% YES 6% NO
- 8) In your opinion, what rank should those selected to participate be? (please circle)

16% Firefighter 37% Captain 21% Battalion Chief 21% Asst. Chief
21% Fire Chief 46% All Ranks should be considered
- 9) How much time do you think the exchange of employees should be?

28% Days 47.5% Weeks 24% Months 0% Years
- 10) Additional comments: Most replied this is an interesting concept

Thank You

Appendix C

Internal Survey Results Odessa Fire Department Charlie Smith, Assistant Chief Employee Exchange Program

I am working on research for a class at the National Fire Academy on the feasibility and benefit of an employee exchange program. This exchange program allows two fire departments to exchange personnel of equal rank for a period of time to share information and ideas relating to the fire service. I would like to include your input in my research on the feasibility for participating in such a program. Please answer these questions as soon as possible so they can be included in the research. If you don't mind, please answer the following questions:

- 1) Do you believe an employee exchange program would be beneficial to the Odessa Fire Department?

Yes
No
- 2) Would you be interested in participating in such a program?

Yes
No
- 3) What rank or ranks do you think should be included in an exchange program?

Firefighter
Fire Inspector
Driver
Fire Marshal
Engineer
Fire Marshal
Captain
Assistant Chief
Battalion Chief
Fire Chief
All Ranks
- 4) In your opinion, how much time should the exchange be for?

Days
Weeks
Months

Thank you for your participation.

Charlie Smith

Appendix D

Internal Survey Results Odessa Fire Department Charlie Smith, Assistant Chief Employee Exchange Program

I am working on research for a class at the National Fire Academy on the feasibility and benefit of an employee exchange program. This exchange program allows two fire departments to exchange personnel of equal rank for a period of time to share information and ideas relating to the fire service. I would like to include your input in my research on the feasibility for participating in such a program. Please answer these questions as soon as possible so they can be included in the research. If you don't mind, please answer the following questions:

- 1) Do you believe an employee exchange program would be beneficial to the Odessa Fire Department?

Yes - **75%** No - **25%**

- 2) Would you be interested in participating in such a program?

Yes - **54%** No – **46%**

- 3) What rank or ranks do you think should be included in an exchange program?

Firefighter – **4.5%** Driver – **0%** Engineer – **0%** Captain – **0%**

Battalion Chief – **0%** Assistant Chief – **0%** Fire Inspector – **0%**

Fire Marshal – **0%** All Ranks – **67%** Fire Chief – **0%**

- 4) In your opinion, how much time should the exchange be for?

Days – **17%** Weeks – **33.5%** Months – **17%**

Thank you for your participation.

Charlie Smith

Appendix E

Longboat Key, (FL) Fire-Rescue Protocol

FIRE-RESCUE INTERN PROGRAM

PURPOSE

Longboat Key Fire-Rescue has entered into an Intern Program with Sarasota County Fire Department. The goal of the program is to increase the diversity of experience of EMS and command personnel, thus enhancing the knowledge, skills, and ability of emergency personnel. The Intern Program also will enhance the effectiveness of mutual aid and automatic aid between both agencies.

AUTHORITY

The program is under the auspices of the Four County Municipal Uniform Inter-local Agreement for the Fire Protection, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and Specialized Services, dated March 10, 1998.

PROCEDURES

1. Contact is made with the Shift Battalion Chief for Sarasota County from the Shift Commander/Deputy Chief of Longboat Key approximately one month in advance.
2. When interning paramedics, the exchange should be a paramedic for a paramedic.
3. Each department's paramedic involved in the exchange is notified as soon as possible of the exchange and which station they should report to on the assigned day.
4. The paramedic is advised that this is an opportunity to learn from other departments and is not punitive. Also, they are not to function as the charge paramedic of the rescue unit.
5. The uniform worn should be the similar type as the uniform of the Sarasota County Fire Department. (i.e. polo shirt and long pants with black shoes)
6. Any different equipment should be reviewed with our personnel (i.e. Lifepak 12's) prior to responding to emergencies. Initially, a training session was conducted on Sarasota County's self-contained breathing apparatus (Scott Packs) with all of Longboat Key Fire-Rescue personnel.
7. Upon arrival at the station, the paramedic should report to the station officer and follow any orders from him/her as if on duty at Longboat Key.

8. If any problems arise while on shift, the paramedic should notify the station officer and, if necessary, notify the Shift Commander/Deputy Chief of Longboat Key for further guidance.
9. The goal of the program is to exchange one person from a shift each month until all personnel have rotated through. After this is accomplished, the program will be evaluated to see if other personnel could benefit from such an internship.

Appendix F

Inter-local Agreement City of Odessa and Terlingua, Texas

STATE OF TEXAS '
COUNTY OF ECTOR '

EMPLOYEE EXCHANGE PROGRAM

This Agreement is entered into between Terlingua Medics, Inc., a non-profit corporation (Terlingua), and the City of Odessa (City), a home rule city. The parties may also be referred to as the Provider Agency or the Requesting Agency, depending on whether or not they are providing paramedics or receiving the service of the paramedics.

RECITALS

WHEREAS, the City and Terlingua have the following common objectives: (i) to provide clinical experience in terms of patient and related instruction for participating paramedics (ii) to improve the overall educational paramedic program by providing opportunities for learning experiences that will progress the paramedics to advanced levels of performance; and

WHEREAS, the City and Terlingua wish to coordinate and participate in a clinical Exchange Program (the Program@) in order to accomplish those objectives.

AGREEMENT

NOW, THEREFORE, for and in consideration of the mutual premises, covenants, obligations and benefits in this Agreement, including the above recitals, Terlingua and City agree as follows:

I SPECIAL PROVISIONS

- 1.1_ Services: The parties agree to exchange paramedics pursuant to the terms and conditions of this Agreement.
- 1.2_ Term: This Agreement is for a primary term of one year, beginning on the date of execution by both parties and continuing until terminated by one of the parties.
- 1.3_ Termination: If either party wishes to withdraw from the Program and terminate the Agreement, it is understood that written notice shall be given to the other party at least 10 days prior to such termination.

1.4 Conditions:

- .1 Each party shall designate to the other party in writing the person or persons authorized to coordinate and supervise the Program on their behalf.
- .2 Paramedics to be assigned to the Exchange Program shall be currently certified by the State of Texas..3 Each party shall assign the same number of paramedics at the same time.
- .4 Terlingua shall provide quarters for paramedics assigned by City, either in-house or through local hotels. City shall provide quarters in-house.
- .5 While in the Exchange Program, the paramedics will follow the policies, procedures, rules and regulations of the place where assigned. The paramedic will also follow the regulations and laws of the State of Texas and the United States while on such assignments.
- .6 The paramedics will dress in their own uniforms as required by the Provider Agency.
- .7 The assigned paramedics will comply with the confidentiality standards of the health care field in order to protect the confidentiality of the patients.
- .8 It is understood that the paramedics assigned and participating in the Program are not employees of the Requesting Agency and are not entitled to any compensation or other benefits of employees, such as workers compensation benefits, from such party.
- .9 Paramedics assigned shall remain under the ultimate command of the Chief or Executive Director of the Provider Agency.
- .10 Any paramedic assigned, designated, or ordered by the Provider Agency to perform duties pursuant to this Agreement shall receive the same wage, salary, pension and all other compensation and all rights for such service, including injury or death benefits, and workers compensation benefits, as though the service had been rendered within the limits of the Provider Agency. All pension payments, uniform expenses, medical expenses and expenses for travel to and from the jurisdiction of the Requesting Agency shall be paid by the Provider Agency.
- .11 In the event that any paramedic performing services pursuant to this Agreement is cited as a party to any civil lawsuit, state or federal, arising out of the performance of those services, he shall be entitled to the same benefits that he would be entitled to receive if such civil action had arisen out of his duties as a member of the Provider Agency.

- .12 Each party to this Agreement expressly waives all claims against the other party to this Agreement for compensation for any loss, damage, personal injury, or death occurring as a consequence of the performance of this Agreement, to the extent permitted by law.
- .13 Third party claims against members shall be governed by the Texas Tort Claims Act or other appropriate statutes, ordinances or laws of the State of Texas. The Requesting Agency shall be responsible to hold harmless the Provider Agency and to discharge any claims or suits that arise while the assigned paramedic is performing services for the Requesting Agency.
- .14 It is expressly understood and agreed that, in the execution of this Agreement, no party waives, nor shall be deemed hereby to waive, any immunity or defense that would otherwise be available to it against claims of third parties arising in the exercise of governmental powers and functions.
- .15 Paramedics of the Provider Agency shall report to the Requesting Agency's officer in control at the location to which they have been assigned, and shall be under the direction of the Requesting Agency's Chief or Executive Director, but shall remain under the ultimate command of the Chief or Executive Director of the Provider Agency.
- .16 While any paramedic regularly employed as such by a Provider Agency is in the service of the Requesting Agency, he shall be a paramedic of the Requesting Agency and be under the direction of the requesting Agency's Chief or Executive Director with all the powers of a regular paramedic of the Requesting Agency, as fully as though he were within the territorial limits of the governmental or non-profit entity where he is regularly employed; and his qualifications, where regularly employed, shall constitute his qualifications for a paramedic within the territorial limits of the Requesting Agency, and no other oath, bond or compensation need be made.
- .17 The parties will provide general public liability insurance coverage against claims for personal injury, death or property damage occurring in connection with acts or omissions while participating in the Program. The limits of such insurance shall not be less than \$300,000.00 per occurrence for personal injury or death and not less than \$100,000.00 per occurrence for property damage. All insurance required under this Agreement will name the other party as an additional insured. No such policy shall be subject to cancellation or reduction of coverage or other modifications except upon at least 30 days prior written notice to the other party. If a party is covered by a self insurance program, a certificate of such self insurance shall satisfy this requirement.
- .18 The Agreement is conditioned on the continued medical supervision and compliance with the required protocols of Dr. Dave Spear, Odessa, Texas, by both parties.

II GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 2.1 Legal Construction: In case any one or more of the provisions contained in this Agreement shall for any reason be held to be invalid, illegal, or unenforceable in any respect, such invalidity, illegality, or unenforceability shall not affect any other provision thereof, and this Agreement shall be considered as if such invalid, illegal, or unenforceable provision had never been contained in this Agreement.
- 2.2 Assignment: This Agreement cannot be assigned without the prior written consent of the other party.
- 2.3 Counterparts: This Agreement may be executed in any number of counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original and constitute one and the same document.
- 2.4 Captions: The captions to the various clauses of this Agreement are for informational purposes only and shall not alter the substance of the terms and conditions of this Agreement.
- 2.5 Non-Discriminatory Policy: Parties agree that, as to all of the programs and activities arising out of this Agreement, they shall comply fully with all Civil Rights Acts and specifically will not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or by reason of being disabled.
- 2.6 Entire Agreement: This Agreement embodies the complete agreement of the parties hereto, superseding all oral or written previous and contemporary agreements between the parties and relating to matters in this Agreement and, except as otherwise provided herein, cannot be modified without written agreement of the parties.
- 2.7 Force Majeure: Neither of the parties shall be required to perform any term, condition or covenant in this Agreement so long as such performance is delayed or prevented by force majeure, which shall mean acts of God, civil riots, floods and any other cause not reasonably within the control of such party except as herein provided and which by the exercise of due diligence such party is unable, wholly or in part, to prevent or overcome.
- 2.8 Independent Contractor: In performing services under this Agreement, the relationship between the parties is that of an independent contractor, and the parties by the execution of this Agreement do not change that independent status. No term or provision of this Agreement or act of a party in the performance of this Agreement shall be construed as making that party or its employees the agents, servants, or employees of the other party or make the project a joint-enterprise.
- 2.9 Liability: The liability of the parties, if any, shall be assumed by each party in accordance with the laws of the State of Texas, without waiving any governmental immunity available to the parties under Texas law, or without waiving any defenses of the parties under Texas law.

TERLINGUA
TERLINGUA MEDICS, INC.

CITY
CITY OF ODESSA

By: _____
Jeff Majewski, EMT-P Director

By: _____
Jerry S. McGuire, City Manager

EXECUTED this the _____ day of _____, 20_____.

(CITY OF ODESSA)

STATE OF TEXAS '
COUNTY OF ECTOR '

BEFORE ME, _____(notary's name) on this day personally appeared **Jerry S. McGuire, City Manager,** (person's name) known to me to be the person whose name is subscribed to the foregoing instrument and acknowledged to me that he executed the same in the capacity stated, as the act of the municipal corporation, for the purposes and consideration therein expressed.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL of office this _____ day of _____, A.D., 2001.

Notary Public in and for the State of Texas

(TERLINGUA MEDICS, INC.)

STATE OF TEXAS '
COUNTY OF ECTOR '

BEFORE ME, _____(notary's name) on this day personally appeared _____, (person's name) known to me (or proved to me on the oath of _____ or through _____[description of identity card or other document]) to be the person whose name is subscribed to the foregoing instrument and acknowledged to me that he/she executed the same in the capacity stated, as the act of the corporation, for the purposes and consideration therein expressed.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL of office this _____ day of _____, A.D., 2001.

Notary Public in and for the State of Texas



Appendix G Fire Department



Standard Operating Guidelines

NAME/SUBJECT OF GUIDELINE	GUIDELINE NUMBER	REVISED ON
Employee Exchange Program	100.19	01/02/2002

Purpose:

The purpose of this protocol is to establish a guideline for implementing an employee exchange.

Participant Selection:

The selection of the participant will be a person in the department most beneficial for the exchange. The exchange shall be with an employee of equal rank if possible.

Length of Exchange:

The length of the exchange shall not exceed two weeks. If more time is needed, written approval must be obtained from the Chief of Department.

Expense of Exchange:

The Chief of the department shall determine the responsibility of the expense of each employee exchange. If the Chief determines the exchange will be beneficial to the department, he/she may decide the Department will cover the cost. If an exchange is taking place from the request of another agency or department, the requesting agency shall be responsible for exchange expense.

Employee Pay and Benefits:

Each member will continue to receive their pay and benefits from their home department. Time away from the Odessa Fire Department may be considered as administrative leave upon approval of the Chief of the Department.

Employee Exchange Requirements:

- ~ Written approval from Chief of the Odessa Fire Department
- ~ Written approval from Chief of exchanging department.
- ~ Inter-local agreement shall be written by the City of Odessa Legal department and approved and signed by the City and/or County administration of both exchanging departments.
- ~ Written agreements on goals and objectives for the exchange. Chiefs of both Departments and all participants must sign agreement stating approval and knowledge of goals and objectives, date of exchange, length of exchange, legal/liability issues, and etc.

- ~ Upon return to work of the OFD employee from an exchange, the employee is to give a written report to the Chief as to the information pertinent to satisfying the goals and objectives of the exchange.
- ~ All other requirements as agreed upon by the City of Odessa, Odessa Fire Department Chief, exchanging personnel, and the exchanging City and fire department administration.

Appendix H

December 18, 2001 E-mail Interview with: Scott Rounds, Battalion Chief, Chandler, (AZ.) Fire Department

Question 1: Do you believe the exchange program is beneficial to the operation of your department as far as exchanging ideas and gaining first hand knowledge of how others do things?

The exchange program is beneficial to our city (department) in terms of experience of how our automatic aid cities do business. We use the same standard operating procedures (called volume II) throughout the region. It's the different interpretations of the procedures that help all involved grow.

Question 2: Should other departments consider this as a valuable networking resource?

This has been a valuable networking tool because of the growth we have experienced here. The exchange of ideas helps validate our professionalism we are not a one horse town any longer). We have the opportunity to demonstrate our abilities thus raising confidence within the region that we are true players.

Question 3: How long do you think is a reasonable time for the exchange of employees?

The time for the exchange of employees has only been for a 24-hour shift. Our cities are so close that an extended time would not be needed because of the logistics involved. If and when we get to exchange personnel with departments much farther away, the need for an extensive time frame should be looked at.

Question 4: Does the employee being exchanged wear the uniform of their department or the uniform of the department they are exchanged with?

Chandler Fire employees wear Chandler Fire uniforms at all times. They are working for CFD under assignment to the other department. (All of our uniforms match, the only difference would be the name of the city.)

Question 5: Does the employee still receive his/her pay from their own department for the time they are gone on the exchange?

As they are under assignment they are still being paid by our city.

Question 6: Where do they stay? Do they stay at the fire station, or do they stay at a motel? Does your department pick up the expenses?

The exchange program includes both our department and the department we are exchanging with. The employees just trade places for the day (shift). Its through this trade that the employee experiences exactly what is done during that department's shift. Each employee sleeps at the others station acting in the capacity of the rank they possess. ie. Captain for Captain-- each Captain will run the station/apparatus with support from the Battalion Chief. This program really has just started and I'm sure written procedures are soon to follow. As of now all involved have really enjoyed the experience. (we set no one up to fail--support is provided by all).

Appendix I

E-mail Interview December 20, 2001: Lynchburg, Virginia Fire Chief Buddy Martinette

Question 1) **Do you recommend an employee exchange program for the fire service, if So why?**

Yes. It is very valuable to see how organizations approach similar challenges under different cultural influences.

Question 2) **How long (days, weeks, months, years) do you think the exchange should be for?**

The time should be based on the desired outcome of the visit.

Question 3) **Has the firefighter certification from your State been an issue by the other states which you have participated with in an exchange Program?**

No

Question 4) **Did you pay your own expenses (meals, travel, hotel, etc) or were they paid by your department?**

All except personal expense items like sight seeing were paid by the City.

Question 5) **Did your salary and the salary of the person you exchanged with come from your own agencies?**

YES

Question 6) **Did you actively participate in the daily operations of the department you were visiting, or were you observing the operations as a networking opportunity?**

Both

Question 7) **Did the chief exchanging with you have administrative duties during his stay at your department?**

No

Question 8) **Which ranks of the Fire Service do you recommend participating with an exchange program?**

Persons who are expected to analyze and solve problems at the management or strategic level.

Question 9) **Are there any problems that you experienced during your participation with an employee exchange program?**

No

Question 10) **Did you and the other person participating in the exchange program wear their own department's uniform or the uniform of the department they were visiting?**

Yes, but mostly civilian clothes.

Appendix J**State Fire Commission****POLICY STATEMENT Number 5/94****AUSTRALIAN FIREFIGHTER TRAINING AND EDUCATION EXCHANGE PROGRAM**

The Tasmania Fire Service encourages all permanent employees to gain as broad an experience base as is possible. To assist with this aim the Tasmania Fire Service has agreed to participate in the above program.

Attached is a copy of an agreement that will be signed in the event of a Firefighter, Leading Firefighter or Officer undertaking an exchange with an employee of similar classification from another State.

Any exchange must in the first instance be arranged between individuals from the respective States. Applications are called from time to time however all expenses involved with travel to and from the States and accommodation for the duration of the exchange remain the responsibility of the participants.

The attached agreement is promulgated for information only.

G E Lowe
CHIEF OFFICER

9 November 1994



Tasmanian - State Fire Commission

AUSTRALIAN FIREFIGHTER TRAINING AND EDUCATION EXCHANGE PROGRAM

AGREEMENT

1. This Agreement dated the *Day* of *Month* 199* between the donor agency, the host agency and the participant, contains the guiding principles for a scheme known as the 'Australian Firefighter Training and Education Exchange Program'.
2. The program exists to provide employees with the opportunity to work in an alternative fire service in Australia, to enhance cross-organizational knowledge and awareness of fire and other emergency response procedures and practices, and to contribute to the personal and professional development of firefighters and officers.
3. In this Agreement, the following definitions apply:

'Program' - the 'Australian Firefighter Training and Education Exchange Program'.

'Agency' - a Fire Service (whether a body corporate or unincorporated association or organization) that is participating in the program.

'Donor Agency' - agency which provides the participant and in which a participant is employed.

'Host Agency' - agency which receives the participant and where a participant is temporarily located.

'Participant' - a Firefighter, Leading Firefighter or operational Officer with a minimum of four (4) years experience, who takes part in the program, and is appropriately trained and qualified to perform the duties required by the host agency.
4. The donor agency will provide all prospective participants with appropriate information, including a copy of this Agreement, to enable participants to be fully aware of the aims and conditions of the program, and participants must agree to be bound by this agreement, prior to offering themselves as candidates for participation.
5. Donor agencies are responsible for selecting participants from their Service, and exchanges ("an exchange") are on a 'one for one' basis, for up to twelve (12) months, over mutually agreed dates.
6. In each exchange, the donor agency and the host agency AGREE that these principles and arrangements will apply:
 - 6.1. Each agency shall have a nominated "Liaison Officer", who is responsible for facilitating all aspects of the program.

- 6.2. The host agency will provide a mentor to enhance the learning experience of participants. Mentors may change during the course of an exchange.
- 6.3. Each exchange will commence with an orientation period, as determined by the host agency. At the beginning of an exchange, a senior officer from the host agency shall give each participant a detailed explanation of operational procedures, with emphasis on Occupational Health and Safety.
- 6.4. Participants are bound by the operational rules, practices, principles and directions of the host agency.
- 6.5. The donor agency shall continue to employ and assume employment related financial and statutory liability for the participant throughout the exchange subject to the operational rules, practices, principles and directions of the host agency. In particular the donor agency shall:
 - 6.5.1. Hold the Participant covered under the donor agency's worker's compensation or work health scheme during the exchange, and warrants to the host agency that such scheme is in place and covers and applies to the participant during the exchange.
 - 6.5.2. Not meet travelling expenses incurred by the participant during the exchange period in connection with movement between the agencies;
- 6.6. Participants are generally discouraged from taking annual leave and must not take long service leave during and exchange period. Any leave taken by a participant shall be at the discretion of the host agency. Appropriate notice of any leave taken shall be forwarded to the donor agency, so that records can be adjusted.
- 6.7. Only essential overtime shall be worked by a participant, as determined by the host agency. Overtime will be paid by the donor agency however the host agency will reimburse the donor agency for the actual cost of such overtime. The host agency shall also meet any costs or reimburse the donor agency any costs paid associated with work related travel within the host agency's area of operation.
- 6.8. Participants are permitted to wear the uniform, including rank insignia, supplied by their donor agency. Any necessary additional uniform items will be provided by, and at the expense of the host agency.
- 6.9. Participants will be responsible for making their own accommodation arrangements.
- 6.10. Participants should have an understanding of the implications of, and refrain from applying for promotion while engaged in the exchange program.
7. Participants may withdraw from an exchange after giving the host agency notice of their intention, at least fourteen (14) days prior to completion of a roster cycle. Withdrawal by one participant may also necessitate withdrawal of the reciprocal participant.
8. In order to gain maximum benefit from the program, participants must be willing to be placed and the host agency shall endeavor to place the participants in as broad a range of positions as possible.